

HIGHLIGHTS

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR CHRONICLES

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT BECOMES TOOL OF RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA

The human rights organisation Amnesty International published a [statement](#) on 4 August that the Ukrainian military, in its efforts to fight off Russian occupiers, is violating international humanitarian law and endangering civilians. Although it refers to a study, its full text has not been published.

The release of this statement was widely used by Russian propaganda. All media outlets focused only on the part of the statement that said that Ukraine was violating international humanitarian law, while omitting to mention that the cause for civilian deaths were Russian military strikes. Some points, for instance, that the Ukrainian army's violations of international humanitarian law do not justify Russian shelling, which is causing Ukrainian civilians to suffer and die, was completely ignored in the publications. Meduza [published](#) a review of publications in the Russian media. Ukraine denied these accusations.

The Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy [condemned](#) the selectivity of Amnesty International. Presidential advisor Mykhailo Podolyak said that any statements about violations by the Ukrainian army are of a nature of an information operation to discredit the Armed Forces of Ukraine and to undermine the supply of weapons from Western partners. In particular, he pointed out that the authorities are consistently taking all measures to help Ukrainian residents move from active combat zones to safer areas.

The Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba [stressed](#) that the report creates a false equivalence between perpetrator and victim, and the Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov [added](#) that it is impossible to equate unprovoked Russian aggression and Ukraine's self-defense.

The Center for Countering Disinformation of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine [analyzed](#) how the Amnesty International report helped Russia to justify the crimes against humanity committed in Ukraine. Furthermore, the Center also underlined the likelihood that Russia will increase shelling since after the Amnesty International report, Russia will be able to classify Ukrainian civilian infrastructure as a legitimate military target.

The statement was harshly criticized by the Ukrainian human rights community. The head of the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union Oleksandr Pavlychenko [noted](#) that the situation was presented one-sidedly, because the researchers only had access to territory controlled by Ukraine. The initiative “Tribunal for Putin” [stressed](#) that the statement did not contain an analysis of the factors influencing the determination of whether the mentioned situations constitute a violation of international humanitarian law, namely the nature and tactics of the aggressor’s attacks, the measures taken by Ukraine to inform, protect or evacuate the civilian population, or an analysis of available alternatives for military stationing. The reactions of other human rights organizations and media can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

The British newspaper The Times, in its [analysis](#) of the situation surrounding the release, stressed that Amnesty International had become a mouthpiece for Russian propaganda, defaming the victims of its aggression and misinterpreting the content of international law. The Ukrainian office of Amnesty International [announced](#) that it had not participated in the preparation and distribution of the report, and “representatives of the Ukrainian office did everything they could to prevent this material from being made public”, since without examining the situation from both sides and considering the position of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry, the report “[sounded](#) like support for Russian narratives” and “had become an instrument of Russian propaganda”. It is also noted that Amnesty International’s Crisis Response Department did not record a single war crime by the Ukrainian military: it is important to distinguish between war crimes and violations of international humanitarian law (IHL), which governs the laws and customs of war. Only grave violations of IHL are considered war crimes and require criminal prosecution.

A statement condemning the Russian army’s war crimes in Ukraine was [published](#) by the Polish office of Amnesty International.

Peter Stano, Speaker of the European Commission, [commented](#) on the statement, noting that everything that is happening in Ukraine is a direct consequence of Russia’s illegal aggression.

The British ambassador to Ukraine [tweeted](#) that the only danger to Ukrainian citizens is from Russian shelling, and it will disappear if Russia stops the war.

The historian Boyd van Dijk (Melbourne University), author of a book on the creation of the Geneva Conventions, [analyzed](#) the criticism of Amnesty. In his opinion, the more important argument is that it is impossible to compare the relatively minor violations Ukrainian troops in comparison to the massive violations by Russia, which is invading.

On 7 August, the central office of Amnesty International [apologized](#) for the “distress and anger” caused by the report, noting that their priority in this and any “conflict” is ensuring that civilians are protected, but stating that they fully support the conclusions presented in their report. Amnesty International also stressed that nothing that they documented among the ZSU’s actions in any way justifies Russia’s actions.

ZSU MAKE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN DESTROYING RUSSIAN MILITARY LOGISTICS

The Ukrainian Armed Forces and Ukrainian intelligence have made [significant](#) progress this week in destroying the [logistics](#) of the Russian armed forces and their administrative bases.

Russian forces continue [to gather](#) in the south of Ukraine and the [Kryvyi Rih](#) area, probably in anticipation of a ZSU [counterattack](#). Instead of the bridges that have been [damaged](#) by the ZSU, they have to use less reliable [pontoon](#) crossings to transport military equipment across the Dnipro river.

[According](#) to the British Ministry of Defence, on the eastern axis, Russia’s advance has been minimal in the last month.

During the first 5 days of mandatory evacuation of people from the Donetsk region, almost 2 thousand people could be [evacuated](#). In addition to evacuation via evacuation trains, people have also been leaving by their own transport and buses. At the same time, organized evacuation from the neighboring Luhansk Oblast is [no longer possible](#) due to the lack of corridors; the story of the evacuation of a family from Sievierodonetsk is [told](#) by Ukrainska Pravda.

Reports on this situation in the regions as of 9 August can be found [here](#), and on the frontline – [here](#).

In all, at least 10 Russian generals have already been [killed](#) on the battlefield in Ukraine since the beginning of the full-scale invasion. [According](#) to the General Staff of the ZSU, Russian military losses totalled 42,640 as of the morning of 9 August. The Pentagon believes that since the start of the full-scale invasion, Russia has lost around 70-80 thousand military personnel in Ukraine – meaning those both killed and wounded. The Russian armed forces are trying to replenish personnel, including by creating regional “volunteer” units and [mobilizing](#) citizens of the new temporarily occupied territories, [as well as](#) the “[L/DPR](#)”. Russian prisoners [told](#) Mediazona that in the prison colonies they are recruiting people to participate in the war against Ukraine. In some of these colonies, recruitment is carried out by Yevgeny Prigozhin himself, who is called the owner of the Wagner Group.

RUSSIA PREPARES FOR "SCORCHED EARTH" STRATEGY AND PSEUDO-REFERENDUMS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

In the city of Mariupol, temporarily occupied by the Russian occupying forces in the Donetsk Oblast, the death rate has increased fivefold, [according](#) to the Mariupol City Council. The International Committee of the Red Cross [said](#) that they are providing medicines and drinking water to medical institutions in the city, but they have no authority to assess the mortality rate.

The Kherson Regional State Administration remarked that before a possible counterattack by the ZSU, Russian occupying troops mined vital supply lines in Kherson, including the gas, electricity and water supplies. According to regional authorities, the Russians are preparing for a strategy of "terror and scorched earth." [Kidnappings](#) and the practice of [forced issuing of passports](#) continue in the region. The Kakhovka task group of the ZSU [stated](#) that when inspecting the de-occupied part of the Kherson region, de-miners disarmed a large number of explosive devices, planted by the Russian armed forces before retreating, including in residential buildings and playgrounds.

A total of 1,060 settlements in Ukraine have been [de-occupied](#).

Before the [pseudo-referendum](#), the occupiers have been trying to "buy" the votes of the residents of Kherson Oblast, including by offering them material assistance, and the same is happening in the occupied part of [Luhansk](#) Oblast. On 8 August, the head of the occupied part of Zaporizhzhia Oblast [signed](#) an order to begin preparations for a pseudo-referendum on "reunification" with Russia. It has also been reported that people are being [brought](#) to the region to create a crowd for the announcement of the "referendum". According to Meduza, in July, at the request of the Kremlin, a poll was conducted in the occupied territories of Ukraine about "joining Russia": under direct pressure, only [about 30%](#) of those surveyed spoke in favor of the region "joining" Russia. This confirms that pseudo-referendums in the temporarily occupied territories are possible only as a [fake](#).

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy [stressed](#) that all those who help Russian occupiers hold a pseudo-referendum in the south of the country will be brought to justice, and if they are held, negotiations between Russia and Ukraine will become [impossible](#).

ALL NUCLEAR SAFETY MEASURES VIOLATED AT NUCLEAR POWER PLANT SEIZED BY RUSSIAN TROOPS

On 5 August, an attack by Russian armed forces on Europe's largest nuclear power plant in Zaporizhzhia resulted in severe damage to the nitrogen-oxygen station and [shut down](#) a power supply unit. Risks also remain of a hydrogen leak and release of radioactive substances. On 6 August, Russian troops again launched missile strikes at the site of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, with the shelling [damaging](#) three radiation monitoring sensors around the site's spent fuel storage facility. One of the plant's employees was injured.

Energoatom noted that this makes it impossible to detect a deterioration in the radiation situation or a radiation leak from the spent nuclear fuel containers. The Insider, citing its source, wrote that Russian occupying forces probably mined the

engine room of one of the power supply units of the power plant. According to another source, the territory around the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant has been mined.

Referring to intelligence, the British Ministry of Defence [stated](#) that Russian forces are probably using the territory of the power plant to rest, in order to minimize the risks of Ukrainian attacks.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry [condemned](#) the shelling and called on partner countries to immediately take measures to force Russia to withdraw from the power plant and transfer it to Ukrainian control. Ukraine [called](#) on the UN and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to send a security mission to the nuclear power plant. According to [experts](#) from the American Institute for the Study of War (ISW), [threats](#) made by the head of the radiation, chemical and biological defense troops of the Russian armed forces to destroy the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant are likely false, designed to distract attention from the real risks associated with the mining of the plant and the storage of military weapons near nuclear reactors and nuclear waste storage facilities, and to reduce the willingness to partner countries to provide military support for the Ukrainian counteroffensive.

The General Director of the IAEA, Rafael Grossi [called](#) on all sides to show maximal restraint. Earlier in an interview, he [stated](#) that all nuclear safety measures had been violated at the seized Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. The [EU](#) strongly condemned Russia's actions. On whether it's possible to disconnect the nuclear power plant from Ukraine's energy system and what the possible consequences of its shelling are in Ekonomichna Pravda.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy [called](#) for additional sanctions to be introduced against Russia.

U.S. ANNOUNCES NEW MILITARY AID PACKAGE

The US Department of Defense has [announced](#) a new \$1 billion military aid package for Ukraine, which for the first time includes, in particular, ammunition for the advanced anti-aircraft missile system NASAMS, as well as armored medical transport vehicles. In addition, the United States [will provide](#) an additional \$4.5 billion in financial assistance to the Ukrainian government, which will be directed to the state budget.

In July, Ukraine's state budget [received](#) 80 billion hryvnia in grant aid from partners and allies.

Since the beginning of the full-scale war, Ukraine has already seized Russian assets worth 28 billion hryvnias, it is also proposed to [confiscate](#) 903 sites that belong to Russia, and a working [group](#) was created under the Office of the President of Ukraine to create and implement a mechanism of compensation for the damage caused by Russia.

HALF OF THE TOP 10 RUSSIAN OLIGARCHS HAVE NOT BEEN SANCTIONED

The USA has [expanded](#) its list of sanctions, in particular, it added the collaborator heads of the occupation administrations of Kherson Oblast and Mariupol to the list of collaborators.

Canada also [expanded](#) its sanctions against Russia to include Russian servicemen and defense sector organizations involved in the atrocities in Bucha. [Switzerland](#) joined the seventh package of EU sanctions against Russia. At the same time, a group of analysts at Trap Aggressor, which monitors sanctions against Russia, [notes](#) that half of the top 10 Russian oligarchs have still not been sanctioned. And Bloomberg [writes](#) that Russia is using a new method to circumvent Western oil sanctions.

DEBUNKING FAKES

RUSSIA SAYS EUROPE REFUSES TO HOLD A SPECIAL TRIBUNAL, EUROPE CONTINUES TO PREPARE FOR IT

Russian propaganda [media](#) are spreading [reports](#) that Europe allegedly is refusing to “set up a special tribunal” to investigate crimes committed by Russia during military operations in Ukraine, citing an [interview](#) with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba. Russian officials have repeatedly [criticized](#) the possibility of investigating these crimes, and this statement is [another fabrication](#) in their attempt to discredit the international justice system. In fact, the international discussion is about the format in which this investigation will take place and its legal aspects.

In his interview, Dmitry Kuleba spoke not of Europe’s refusal to organize such a tribunal, but about the complexities of the discussion, as is to be expected given the symbolic weight of such proceedings. It is also a question of whether the tribunal will become an alternative to the pre-existing International Criminal Court. War crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed on the territory of Ukraine by Russian citizens falls under the court’s jurisdiction and the ICC is already conducting investigations, with the first case possibly being [heard](#) as early as this winter.

In July, 43 countries and the EU came out in [support](#) of Ukraine in bringing a case against Russia to the International Court of Justice.

The idea of creating a special tribunal has been discussed for a long time and has been supported by the [European Parliament](#) and [PACE](#). In July, a [conference](#) was held in The Hague at which representatives from 45 countries focused on developing an approach to investigating Russia’s war crimes in Ukraine. The BBC [published](#) the opinions of international law experts on the scope of powers of such a tribunal. The Ukrainian Human Rights Centre ZMINA [reported](#) on the discussions surrounding the tribunal’s creation.

Benjamin Ferencz, former prosecutor at the Nuremberg Nazi trials, has previously [stated](#) that Russian President Vladimir Putin may be convicted of crimes against Ukraine, but this requires determination and evidence that the war crimes are directly linked to him. Eamon Gilmore, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights

[suggested](#) Russian President Vladimir Putin could face trial. Ukrainian officials – President Volodymyr [Zelenskyy](#) and Justice Minister Denys [Maliuska](#) – noted that the principle of the inevitability of punishment should also be applied to people whose decisions led to crimes being committed, even if they have immunity. Since the existing courts do not have sufficient jurisdiction, only a special tribunal for aggression against Ukraine can provide this. Earlier, Dmytro Kuleba [outlined](#) five main parameters that Ukraine proposes to form the basis of a future special tribunal. International preparations are ongoing.